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Ministry offers youth summer employment opportunities



Mike Hayakawa

For high school, college or university students, finding summer employment can be a challenge and at times, frustrating.

If, however, you have an interest in working in the environmental or natural resource management field, the Ministry of Natural Resources might have something that could be intriguing.

And with a little luck and fortuitous timing, it could lead to bigger things down the road.

Just recently, the ministry announced it will invest more than \$10 million to launch six employment programs this summer for Ontario's young people.

The programs to be offered include: a Co-op program (designed for post-secondary students that lasts 12 to 16 weeks); an Ontario-Quebec Student Job Exchange Program (for university students wishing to obtain work in natural resources management while experiencing a different cultural environment that runs 13 weeks); Summer Experience Program (for individuals between 15 to 24, or up to age 29 if disabled where students can explore various jobs to obtain a broad range of skills and experience in natural resource management); Internship Program (contract opportunities for up to 40 weeks that provides significant work skills and experience in natural resource

management to post-secondary students or recent graduates); Ontario Rangers program (an eight-week program for 17-year-old students which allows them to travel to a different region of the province to work outdoors) and Ontario Stewardship Rangers (an extension of the Ontario Rangers Program that allows 17-year-olds to work in the natural resources field while living at home).

Through these programs, the ministry revealed that some 2,300 hands-on jobs and learning opportunities will be created.

The ministry assures those who apply that they will receive more than just a pay cheque.

All youth employment programs can provide on-the-job training, work experience in natural resources, making new friends and networks and a sense of making a positive contribution to the environment.

Margaret Skenderis, a 22-year-old student who is in her fourth year at York University and is majoring in physical geography, confirms the experience she gained last year while working as a fish and wildlife technician at the ministry's Aurora District office last summer was invaluable.

"It was really good. There was a lot of hands-on stuff that we got to do. It gives you valuable work related experience that you can't get in a classroom. We got to work with a lot of biologists and engineers. It was helpful," said Skenderis, who has re-applied this summer.

Interested applicants can receive ministry employment information from their guidance offices and placement centres sometime this month. As well, the information is posted on the ministry's Youth Program web site at: www.mnr.gov.on.ca/mnr/youthprograms/

Lee-Ann Choquette, a spokesperson from the ministry's district office in Peterborough, notes the application deadline for the Ontario Rangers Program is March 26 while the deadline for the Ontario Stewardship Rangers program is April 20. For these two programs, application forms must be submitted to the Ministry of Natural Resources Youth Programs Office, Human Resources Branch, 300 Water Street, P.O. Box 7000, Peterborough, Ont. K9J 8M5.

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March 30, 2001

As the objective of the program is to provide students with work experience related to their field of study, applications will be evaluated based on the quality of the experience offered and local priorities.

To apply or to find out more about this program, please contact your nearest Human Resources Development Canada office or call 1-800-935-5555.

Internet: www.hrdc-drhc.gc.ca

*Please note that the application deadline for the Northwest Territories and Nunavut is April 6, 2001



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